

**TO TELL OR NOT TO TELL:
TALKING WITH YOUR KIDS
ABOUT THEIR AUTISM
DIAGNOSIS**

TAKE OUT POINTS

Whether or not we are ready?

Is our child ready?

Misgivings about informing the diagnosis.

Guidelines on how to go about it.

Provide resources and support.



SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES!

Meaning of 'Autism'?

How do you feel about your child's diagnosis?

MISGIVINGS ABOUT AUTISM

Please share your concerns and fears!!!

CONCERNS (SHARED)

SOME OF THE POSSIBLE FEARS:

- The diagnosis may be traumatic to the child
- Your child may not understand everything
- You may feel that the child may have compromised options in life
- Your child may suffer emotionally and experience anger or depression
- Your child or others may use their diagnosis to avoid learning or participating in activities
- The child may be sensitive to the idea of being different
- The stigma associated with the diagnosis

RESEARCHERS HAVE FOUND.....

- Sense of relief.
- More empowered.
- Lower chances of attributing to the wrong difference.
- Can pinpoint why they feel isolated/lonely?
- More problem solving / seeking help.
- **Low chances of being misinformed.**

ARE YOU READY?

What does autism mean to you?

Have you accepted the diagnosis?

How are you dealing with the diagnosis?

What is your relationship with your child?

Any other life stressors?

ASSESS READINESS IN YOUR CHILD

- Chronological Age
- Mental Age
- Appreciate Differences?
- Social Awareness / Maturity
- Emotional Maturity

ALSO CONSIDER?

Why are you thinking of breaking the diagnosis?

- Any signs?
- Any questions?
- Any events?
- Any behavioral change? Is it positive or negative?

BREAKING THE DIAGNOSIS

Plan the set up.

Collect resources.

Multiple settings.

Minimum distractions.

Special – child/parent activity.

Reaction may be different from your expectations.

Also, consider finding others to talk to your child, maybe a teacher, therapist, or a good family friend.

TIPS FOR SHARING DIAGNOSIS

- Stay positive
- Pitch the information at your child's level.
- Note child's ability to process information.
- DO NOT pitch the information in one go!
- Be ready to answer questions.
- If you do not know the answer, be honest!
- Offer to explore it together!!!

HOW TO ADDRESS?

- Start with talking about the differences.
- Positive traits/gifted skills
- Talk about the obstacles they have overcome!
- No two people are the same.
- Give positive examples if any!!

SOME OF THE VIDEOS:



Green Box ABA LLC.

ADDITIONALLY,

- Introduce to other people with ASD.
Friends, family members etc.
- Consider a social skills group.
- Talk about heroes, famous personalities with ASD..

RESOURCES:

Books, videos, your own personalized social stories!!!

Some of the recommended books for 4-12 years old kids are:

- *All My Stripes* by Shaina Rudolph and Danielle Royer (4-8)
- *The Autism Acceptance Book* by Ellen Sabin (6-13yrs.)
- *Ethan's Story: My Life with Autism* by Ethan Rice (6-9)
- *My Friend with Autism* by Beverly Bishop (7-10)
- *My Brother Charlie* by Holly Robinson Peete (7-10)
- *Different Like Me: My Book of Autism Heroes* by Jennifer Elder (8-12)
- *Mockingbird* by Kathryn Erskine (9-13)
- *Rules* by Cynthia Lord (9-12)

Here is another link to some more books:

- <https://www.appliedbehavioranalysisprograms.com/30-best-childrens-books-about-the-autism-spectrum/>



Zee-ee outside, feeling the scratch of the sun. Finally he felt proud of all his stripes. He said, "There's gotta be one thing just my stripes made. It's just part of me. The other parts make the whole me. I love each stripe because without them, I wouldn't be me!"

VIDEOS

Some of the videos:



CHALLENGING AREAS....

Occasionally, you may have to reveal the diagnosis immediately!!

If it's an Older child who is recently diagnosed.

If there has been recent incidents.

If the child is going through severe emotional symptoms and is attributing to some other trait.

Some more examples.....

HOW TO ADDRESS THEM?

Again,

- Start with you own challenges!!!
- Talk about how you deal with it.
- Gradually move on to the challenging areas.
- Please reassure the child that s/he will always have your support.

QUESTIONS/ COMMENTS?!

RESOURCES:

- Advanced Psychology; How To Tell Your Child That He Has Autism by Dr. William Chen
- Interactive Autism Network: ASD diagnosis: What do we tell the kids?
https://iancommunity.org/cs/articles/telling_a_child_about_his_asd
- Indiana Resource center: Getting Started: Introducing Your Child to His or Her Diagnosis
- Books: <https://www.appliedbehavioranalysisprograms.com/30-best-childrens-books-about-the-autism-spectrum/>
- All my stripes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gaLxpifMcQ&t=57s>

Child friendly videos:

- 12 Fast facts: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=327161914601878>
- Amazing things happen: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7JdCY-cdgkl>
- Marvelous Max: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wc77MksM_2c